The Construction of the new Girls' School building.

4. **Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.**—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) the name of the contractor of the new Girls' School that is being constructed at Ernakulam now, the names of the tenderers, if any, with their rates, the dates of the Gazettes containing tender notifications and the circumstances that led to the acceptance of the present contractor's offer;

(b) the estimated amount of the work;

(c) whether this is the self-same contractor who constructed the Primary School at Ernakulam, the opening ceremony of which was celebrated not long ago;

(d) a list of Government contracts granted by the Engineering Department for the last three years for which public tenders were not invited, along with the contractors' names, allotments and the date of payment for the works?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—(a) Mr. S. Sitarama Ayyar. Tenders were not invited. The work was entrusted to this contractor at the estimated rates, as he was the only one among the contractors who, at the time, could attend to the work satisfactorily and expeditiously.

(b) Rs. 61,000.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Government do not consider it worth-while to place on the table an exhaustive list of all such works executed during the last three years in view of the fact that they are mostly of a petty and contingent nature. A list of major works, i. e., those costing over Rs. 30,000 is appended. (*Vide Appendix I.*)

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Sub-division (a). Without publishing it in the Gazette, how can tenderers or contractors come forward, and how can Government know whether there are such contractors or not?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—In the P. W. D., contractors who could do a work of that size are not many, and I know every one of them who could take up that work in the P. W. D. of the Cochin State, and all the others had had enough work on hand. They could not allot their time, and Mr. Sitarama Ayyar was the only man who could do a work of this size satisfactorily, within the limited time.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—How can Government know that fresh contractors would not come forward, if tenders are invited?

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Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—We are pretty sure of that. But we cannot entrust a work of this nature to those whom we do not know; only approved contractors of Cochin whom we know had any chance in the matter.

President.—We have long experience in the department; we know the contractors, and so we can pick and choose our men.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—How can fresh contractors have a chance then?

President.—We take only experienced contractors. First, we try them in small things, and then we give them big works. Fresh contractors are not entrusted with responsible works all on a sudden.

Contracts and tenders of the P. W. D.

5. **Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.**—Will the Government be pleased to state the number of contracts during the past 3 years wherein the lowest of the tenders were not accepted along with the names and rates of such tenders the rates of the accepted tenders;

and the loss to the Government apparently visible by not accepting the lowest tenders?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—It is not found possible to prepare the exhaustive list asked for, on account of the enormous number of contracts entered into during the last three years. If any work or group of works is specified, the details regarding their tenders will be looked into and furnished.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—"It is not possible to prepare the exhaustive list asked for." Will they be pleased to do it at least for one year?

President.—Why do you want us to do this laborious work?

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—It is only for one year.

President.—If you have got reasonable grounds to show that, in respect of a particular work, the Government did not play an honourable part, put them forward, and we shall explain them to you. First, get a list, and then pick out a work. You must have some ground to think that the Government have not been altogether playing a proper part in regard to these contracts. There must be specific instances before you. Place them before us. Let us see whether we shall be able to give an answer.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—From the list submitted, I understand that works above Rs. 20,000 for which tenders were not called for, are entrusted to one contractor only, with a solitary exception. If only I am furnished with an

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